

THE BRAHMAVÂDIN.

“एकं सत् विभावदुधावदन्ति.”

“That which exists is One: sages call it variously.”—*Rigveda*, I, 164, 46.

VOL. I.
No. 4.

MADRAS, OCTOBER 26, 1895.

PUBLISHED
FORTNIGHTLY.

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ALL-THE-GODS.

1. May auspicious sacrifices, which are unspoiled, unbindered, and effective against opposition, come to us from every side, so that the gods, who, unceasing in their care, are our guardians from day to day, may be ever with us to promote our prosperity.

2. May the auspicious favour of the gods be ours ; may the bounty of the gods who like the righteous worshipper be bestowed upon us ; may we attain the friendship of the gods ; and may the gods extend our term of life to enable us to live long.

3. We invoke them, namely, Bhaga, the unchangeable Maruts, Daksha, Mitra, Aditi, Aryaman, Varuna, Soma, and the Aśvins, by means of an ancient hymn. May the auspicious Sarasvatî bless us with happiness.

4. May the Wind waft to us that happiness-producing medicine ; may Mother Earth and Father Heaven bestow it on us ; and may the joy-giving stones that press the juice of the Soma give it to us. O Ye Aśvins, who are intelligent, hear this.

5. We invoke for protection Him, who is the Lord and the master of all that stands or moves, and who is to be pleased by acts of worship ; so that the infallible Pûshan may become the protector of the increase of our wealth and the guardian of our good fortune.

6. May Indra of wide renown prosper us ; may Pûshan, the possessor of universal wealth, prosper us ; may Târkshya with uninjured follies prosper us ; and, may Brihaspati bestow prosperity on us.

7. May the Maruts, who possess spotted steeds and have the many-coloured cow (*Prisutî*) for their mother, who move in glory and go to sacrifices,—may all the gods who are in the tongue of fire, who are thoughtful and have the sun for their eyes, come here for our protection.

8. O gods, may we, with our ears, hear what is good ; may we, with our eyes, see what is good, O ye holy ones ; with strong and healthy limbs and bodies, may we, singing your praises, attain the god-appointed term of life.

9. One hundred, O ye gods, are indeed the years assigned to us, within which you cause decay to our bodies, and within which our sons become fathers. Before we go through our term of life do not harm us in the middle.

10. Aditi is the heaven. Aditi is what is between earth and heaven, Aditi is the mother, she is the father, she is the son; Aditi is all the gods, Aditi is the five kinds of people, Aditi is all that is born and all that brings forth.
Rigveda V, I, 89.

This worship of all-the-gods is a very characteristic feature of Vedic Religion. And how beautifully it comes out in the above hymn that all-the gods cannot be other than God!

Yet in this hymn we find some of the oldest religious conceptions of the Aryan peoples. Aditi is explained by Sâyaṇa on the authority of Yâska to mean the undivided or mighty mother of the gods. The Adityas are her sons, and they are said to correspond to the *Amesha-Spentas* of the Zend-Avesta. Varuṇa who is also a Greek god is among them, and seems in all probability to have given rise to the Ahura-Mazda of the ancient Persian Aryas.

The White Yajurveda and the Atharvanaveda speak of Aditi as the great mother of the devout, as the mistress of the Law, as strong in might, undecaying, widely-extended, as protecting and offering skilful guidance. European Orientalists are of opinion that Aditi means "infinity, especially the boundlessness of heaven in opposition to the finiteness of the earth, and its spaces"; she is "eternity or the eternal", and is "the element which sustains" the Adityas, "and is sustained by them"; or again she is "the visible Infinite, visible by the naked eye, the endless expanse, beyond the earth, beyond the clouds, beyond the sky."

To think of her as the great womb of time and of creation is to see that she is all that is born and all that brings forth. This mighty mother of gods has been alone the fruitful mother of truly universal religions. Is she not all the gods and all the five kinds of people, who, according to the ancient Indian Aryas, formed the whole of humanity?

Is this kind of worship of all-the-gods really different from the worship of Him who is one only without a second?

SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA'S TEACHINGS.

1. Once a holy man (*sâdhu*) while passing through a crowded street accidentally trod upon the toe of a wicked person. The wicked man, furious with rage, beat the *sâdhu* mercilessly till he fell on the ground in a state of unconsciousness. His disciples took great pains and adopted various measures to bring him back to consciousness: and when they saw that he was coming round a little, one of them asked "Sir, do you recognise who is now serving you." The *sâdhu* replied "He who beat me." A true *sâdhu* finds no distinction between a friend and a foe.

2. Man is like a pillow-case. The colour of the one may be red, that of another, blue, that of a third, black; but all contain the same cotton. So it is with man, one is beautiful, another is black, a third holy, a fourth wicked; but the Divine One dwells within them all.

3. All water is brooded over by *Nârâyana*, but every kind of water is not fit for drink. Similarly though it is true that the Almighty dwells in every place, yet every place is not fit to be visited by man. As one kind of water may be used for washing our feet, another may serve the purposes of ablution, and others may be drunk, and others again may not be touched at all; so there are different kinds of places. We may approach

some; we may enter into the inside of others: while others we must avoid even at a distance.

4. The master said "Everything that exists is God." The pupil understood it literally but not in the true spirit. While he was passing through a street, he met with an elephant. The driver (*Mahout*) shouted aloud from his high place "Move away," "Move away." The pupil argued in his mind, "Why should I move away? I am God, so is the elephant also God; what fear has God from Himself." Thinking thus he did not move. At last the elephant took him up by his trunk and dashed him aside. He was hurt severely and going back to his master he related the whole adventure. The master said "All right. You are God, the elephant is God also, but God in the shape of the elephant-driver was warning you from above. Why did you not pay heed to his warnings?"

5. A husbandman was watering a sugarcane-field the whole of a day. After finishing his task he saw that not a drop of water had entered the field; all the water had gone underground through several big rat-holes. Such is the state of that devotee who cherishing secretly in his heart worldly desires (of fame, pleasures, and comforts), and ambitions, worships God. Though daily praying, he makes no progress because the entire devotion runs to waste through the rat-holes of these desires, and at the end of his life-long devotion he is the same man as before, and has not advanced a bit.

6. Keep thyself aloof at the time of thy devotion from those who scoff at it and those who ridicule piety and the pious.

The Brahmavadin

SATURDAY, 26TH OCTOBER 1895.

KING JANAKA OF VIDEHA.

The doctrine of *Karma* is no bar to a belief in human responsibility, and even the *Advaitin* insists upon a life of virtuous works as a means, along with true knowledge, of securing final emancipation. According to the *Vedântins* generally pleasure is not a fit object of pursuit to the wise. The *Advaitin* is called upon to banish all duality, and with it all relativity and even what we call knowledge. Pleasure and pain, mine and yours, subject and object, and all distinctions of the like nature, are to him illusions to be removed from the human mind. Clinging to life leads to selfishness and the search after pleasure; all work is apt to become worldly and thus bind man more and more to his material bondage; indeed no work goes without a burden of effects to be borne by the bound soul. How then can the *Vedântin* be the advocate of a life of virtue, which implies the knowledge and the pursuit, in spite of the load of *Karma* it may produce, of a determinate course of conduct? Is the "supreme indifference" imposed upon him consistent subjectively with an active exercise of his virtuous impulses? This question we answer in the affirmative, because of the view that virtue and knowledge should be combined by one who seeks final liberation from the bondage of *Karma*. The *Vedântin* is aware that the mind of man has implanted in it inclinations, good and bad; and that it may be likened to "a chariot yoked with vicious horses," because of the domineering tendency of its evil impulses. "The *Devas* and the *Asuras*" of the Upanishads mean generally our senses inclining to good and evil; and "the *Devas* are indeed the younger, the *Asuras* the elder ones."* The *Devas* are the less numerous and the less strong, and the *Asuras* are the more numerous and more powerful. It is this recognition of the original weakness of the human will to follow steadily an unswerving career along the path of

virtue, that seems to us to be symbolised, at least in part, by the Christian conception of the fall of Adam. The *Vedântin* ventures upon no explanation of the preponderance of this original tendency to evil in the composition of man, beyond the general appeal to the law of *Karma* as determining the whole nature and environment of each *Jiva*. But the solid rock upon which man has to base his hostilities against the evil propensities in his nature is no other than his determinate will, firm in its self-relying and self-reforming potency. Each man "rises by his self,"* and his enemy perishes in the contest. The tongue is unruly; the senses are "pierced with evil;" and even the mind is not always reliable. But there is the will of the man armed with knowledge; and it is capable of rising triumphant over all opposition. "He comes to the lake *A'ra* (enemies), and he crosses it by the mind, while those who come to it without knowing the truth, are drowned."† Thus knowledge imparts firmness to the mind; and the firm mind is ever victorious. And as the relations of a man gather round him in the days of his prosperity, the senses, good and bad, readily render obeisance to the victor; and his very enemies become his obedient slaves. "He becomes their supporter, their chief leader, their strong ruler."‡ It is the man that rules over himself here on this earth, that can possibly rule in the higher spheres of the gods,—and in heaven. The intellect should be purified first, as knowledge is the foundation upon which the edifice of a virtuous life should be erected; and that man alone stands a chance of a stainless march along the miry ways of the world, who starts upon his journey with a purified intellect, a noble heart, and a firm will. Man's lot is, thus, regulated in a great measure by his knowledge.

The *Vedântin* clearly and emphatically distinguishes the good from the pleasant. "The good is one thing; the pleasant another. These two, having different objects, chain a man. It is well with him who clings to the good; he who chooses the pleasant, misses his end."§ The *Vedântin* knows that in this world of regrets, the good and the pleasant are not co-equal. The path of virtue is steep and narrow and is rarely attended with pleasure. Man has the good and the pleasant placed before him for his choice; and he should not thoughtlessly dive into the bewitching abyss

* Brih. 3.1.

* Brih. 1.3.7. † Kaushî, 1.4. ‡ Brih. 1.3.15. § Bud. 1.3.15.

of pleasure. The wise man "goes round about them and distinguishes them. Yea, the wise prefers the good to the pleasant, but the fool chooses the pleasant through greed and avarice."*

Salvation is to be attained, as we have said, as the result of virtue combined with true knowledge. No knowledge of the Vedas, no amount of learning, and no acuteness of the intellect can be of any avail to the man "who has not first turned away from his wickedness, who is not tranquil, and subdued, or whose mind is not at rest."† The *Upanishad* or true wisdom stands upon three feet; and these are self-renunciation, right knowledge and abstinence; the self must be gained by "truthfulness,—by renunciation, right knowledge and abstinence."‡ The true purport of the Vedas is that each man should perform his duty. "Say what is true!...Do thy duty! Do not swerve from truth! Do not swerve from duty!...Whatever actions are blameless, those should be regarded, not others...This is the rule. This is the teaching...This is the command."§ And freedom from the bondages of ignorance and of life shall be the reward of the man "who knows these two, the good and the bad."||

The story of Janaka Vaideha, an ancient king of what is now Behar, forms a good illustration of the life of virtue and knowledge which is taught by the *Vedântin* as the true and only path to salvation. He is one of the many *Kshatriyas* mentioned in the *Upanishads* as sages who had gained a knowledge of the highest spiritual truths, and who were yet acting their several parts in the temporal affairs of their dominions, King Asvapâti Kaikaya is represented in the *Chhândogya Upanishad* as the teacher of spiritual knowledge and truth to five great householders and theologians who were all Brahmins. Hiranyanâbha, the prince of Kosala, is mentioned in the *Prasna Upanishad* as the teacher of Sukesas Bhâradvâja; and the names of many other royal saints occur in the other *Upanishads*. It is of persons like these that Sri Krishna says in the *Gîtâ*:— कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकदियः, that is, Janaka and others attained perfection by means of work alone. How can the virtuous ruler and the chivalrous soldier cease to be a man of action? He has to live and move and have his being in action, and the question therefore must have frequently presented itself to him for solution, "Will not action cling to man?" It is a curious fact that the royal class, set down by the Brâhmins as their inferiors in the sanctity of birth, should yet be the recognised teachers of the highest philosophy reached by the Hindu intellect. The Brahmins who approach the kings, proud in their Vedic lore and in their ritualistic observances, are seen to be cowed down by the superior spiritual knowledge of their inferiors in birth; and are often compelled to assume an attitude of learners

before them. The kings with true dignity are also seen to be always pleased with the ready acknowledgement of their superior wisdom by the Brahmins and to be ever ready to impart the truth to them, without rigorously requiring of them the rather trying ordeals of the *Brahmachârin*. It may be that the Brahmins were generally immersed in their sacrificial ceremonials, and neglected alike the duties of the citizen and the knowledge and wisdom of the philosopher. And the royal thinkers, who had often to come down from the high pedestal of sovereignty to take a subordinate part in the Vedic ceremonials conducted by the Brahmins, might have been struck by the contrast between the high pretensions of their *purohīts* and their blind observance of the sacrificial rites; and so impressed, they might have been driven to higher flights of thought and thus gained the knowledge of the *Vedânta*, not within the reach of the self-satisfied Brahmin. The noble privilege of becoming the prophet of a new dispensation has rarely, if at all, fallen to the lot of a punctilious priest. The temporal power of these royal sages might have helped in the promulgation and general acceptance of their doctrines, before which the believer in the exclusive efficacy of the rituals of the Vedas might have had to retire discomfited and beaten.

Whatever may be the explanation, the fact remains that the teachers best known to the *Upanishads* are *Kshatriyâs*; and a king Janaka was the most famous of them all. It is said of him, in the *Brihadâraṇyaka* and the *Kaushîtaki Upanishads*, that "all people run away (to him) saying Janaka is our patron."* He was well-known as a wise and liberal king; and his court was the resort of the learned. He once "sacrificed with a sacrifice at which many presents were offered to the priests. Brâhmanas of the Kurus and Pâñchâlas had come thither, and Janaka Vaideha wished to know, which of those Brâhmanas was the best read. So he enclosed a thousand cows",† and declared that he meant them as the reward of the wisest among them. Yâjñavalkya had alone the boldness to accept the challenge; and ordered his pupil to drive the cows to his abode. This naturally led to a controversy on the abstruse problems of metaphysics between Yâjñavalkya on the one side, and the assembled Brahmins on the other. To the angry question of one whether he was the wisest there, he replied with modesty and dignity: "I bow before the wisest, but I wish indeed to have these cows."‡ He was victorious over every one of his assailants and taught the *Brahman* to Janaka, who, in return for this instruction, offered himself and his country "to be together his slaves."

The Janaka of the *Upanishads* appears to be a distinct personage from another king of the same country and of the same name mentioned in the *Mahâbhârata* and the *Râmâyana*. Indeed the

* Katha. 2-2. † *ibid* 3-24. ‡ Mundaka. 3-15. § Taitt. 1-2. || *ibid*. 2-9.

* Brihad. 2-1-1. † *ibid*, 3-1-1. ‡ Brihad. 4-4-23.

Mahābhārata almost uniformly pre-supposes the story of the *Rāmāyana*; From chapters 218 and 219 of the *Sāntiparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* it becomes probable that in ancient times in Videha there was a line of kings who went by the name of Janakas. Modern students of Comparative Philology make out that the word *Janaka* is philologically allied to the English word *King*; and it may be that an ancient dynasty of Hindu kings in Behar took the title of *Janaka* which, in Sanskrit, means *father*. The Janaka of the Upanishads at whose court Yājñavalkya flourished was either a contemporary of, or came immediately after, the Mahābhārata war; for this Yājñavalkya is undeniably the great teacher of the *White Yajur-Veda*, and was a contemporary of that war as can be made out from the *Mahābhārata* itself. The Janaka referred to in the passage quoted above from the *Bhagavadgītā* must therefore have been an earlier ancestor of the Janaka of the Upanishads; and in the same way in which the Panjab was the cradle of Vedic Religion in India, Behar seems to have been the cradle of Vedāntism.

It is recorded of the earlier Janaka that he was quite famous for his spiritual wisdom and renunciation, and that he was nevertheless devoted whole-heartedly to the performance of his kingly duties. Some say that the religion of the Vedānta is pessimistic. If by this they mean that the Vedānta dwells more upon the burden of existence than upon its enjoyments, and that it inculcates self-sacrifice and self-restraint but not self-indulgence, they are certainly right. The Vedānta is indeed very far from placing before man a gloomy ideal of life on earth and a still gloomier one of the life after death. It is true that to the *Vedāntin* the world is not a fairy-land of rose gardens with rivers of milk and honey flowing therein. On the other hand it is to him a workshop wherein he has to learn with the help of furnaces and fires, of heavy hammers and forceful blows, the invaluable art of forging his own fate for eternity. And woe to him who, forgetting the purpose of his trying apprenticeship, aimlessly allows himself to be fascinated by the beauty of the magical machinery that surrounds him everywhere, and its never-ending toil. This Janaka of ancient fame knew well the purpose of life. In its workshop he would not be idle, for he knew that by work alone can any man learn any art anywhere. Vedāntic renunciation as understood by Janaka did not mean quietism, it only meant the renunciation of selfishness. Those who can not reconcile his strenuous activity in the discharge of the duties of life, with his spiritual wisdom and philosophic renunciation, will find a solution of their difficulty in the well-known saying attributed to him wherein he pointed out that, even if the whole of Mithila, his capital, were burnt down, none of *his* things would be lost.

Panchasikha, the teacher of the Vedānta to a later Janaka in the *Mahābhārata*, thus expounds the doc-

trine: "A person is at his ease fearless of old age and death, if his mind is chastened by the teachings of the *Śrutis*, if he learns to reason well and if he is well versed in traditionary lore. He then grows desirous and ascends up from the attributed *Brahman* to the attributeless One."* Renunciation consists, in the view of the Vedāntin, not exclusively in the ascetic seclusion of the so-called, *tapasvī*, but in the practice of virtue. Like the stoic of old, he will remain indifferent to pleasures and pains, so far as they affect him; but will yet employ his best powers in the active discharge of his obligations. "Listen to what I teach you for your salvation. Even while engaged in deeds, renunciation ought to be the rule, for all sacrifices are enjoined for the renunciation of wealth, and vows for the renunciation of pleasure for self. *Tapas* and *Yoga* are enjoined that we may not be immersed in enjoyment."† It is the mind, that 'chariot yoked with vicious horses,' that is to receive the benefit of all our efforts towards a virtuous life. "For thoughts alone cause the round of births; let a man strive to purify his thoughts. 'What a man thinks, that he is: This is the old secret.'‡ A man, who, by a life of virtue, has purified himself, 'beholds dwelling in goodness, immovable, immortal, indestructible, firm, bearing the name of *Vishnu*, the highest abode, endowed with love of truth and omniscience, the self-dependent Intelligence, standing in its own greatness. . . . Having meditated on him. . . , he obtains the nature of the highest. . . . Om! Adoration to *Brahman*! Adoration!"§

THE ADVAITA PHILOSOPHY.

By N. VAIKHANATHA AIYAR, M.A.

(Continued from page 36.)

The attribution of reality to ignorance and the explanation based upon it of the relation between it and knowledge bring the Advaitin very near the doctrine of Remembrance maintained by Plato. The human soul is described by the Advaitin as well as by the Greek philosopher as having wandered in regions of light prior to its enthrallment in this prison frame; and it has but to break through its prison walls to get back into its usual abode. It is true that the radical difference between the two schools in regard to the ultimate nature of the human soul involves many variations in detail in the applications of the conception of a former life of unfettered glory, and also in the language employed to describe the passage of the soul through this life, and its state in the past and the future. While Plato upholds the eternal individuality of the human soul and believes that its sojourn in this world is but a temporary break in the eternity of its blissful existence, the follower of Sankara fills the universe with a single,

* *Sānti*. 219-16. † *ibid.* 219-16. ‡ *Maitra*. 6-13. § *ibid.* 6-30.

unembodied Brahman and offers no explanation of the individualisation of this Brahman into innumerable *Jivas*. But there is the essential likeness of a going back of the soul or the *Jiva* from a temporary period of thralldom or ignorance to its usual serenity of existence. This must be admitted to be a remarkable coincidence. The difficulty of explaining adequately the whole of the contents of the human mind seems to have pressed with equal weight upon both: and they have both hit at the idea that a part of what knowledge we now possess is the remnant of that which was ours in a prior state.

Taking the world as it is, the Advaitin thus finds it under the sway of *Avidyā*, which works its illusions upon the *Jiva*. And as nothing in the universe is possible without the Brahman originating it, He, as *I'svara*, is the creator. To man's limited intellect, shackled as it is by the bonds of ignorance, the world, his own self, and a creating Divinity appear to be distinct entities. But this is an error. These work in their own phenomenal and illusory world and have been working in it for a period of time which has had no beginning. We do not know why *Avidyā* was first created and why the Brahman allowed Himself to be conditioned by it. Of the existence of these three phenomenal substances there is no doubt; nor is there any doubt regarding either their true nature or their ultimate goal. They are all illusions and are doomed to vanish when the *Jiva* wakes up to the consciousness of its oneness with the Brahman. This consciousness of identity which is to illumine the *Jiva* like a flash of lightning and which is to terminate for good the possibility and the need for knowledge, leads to *Brahmasākshātkāra*—the seeing of Brahman in self. But so long as this consciousness eludes our grasp, we move and have our being in this phenomenal world. To the man who has attained this state of mind, the phenomenal world appears to be a noumenon, and the illusion dances in all its bewitching ways even before his newly opened vision. But he knows their real nature and waits for the liberation from the corporeal frame, for the *Videha-Kairālya* (विदेहकैवल्य), the unembodied bliss, which is the final state of the all-embracing and all-pervasive Soul.

The crux of the whole question lies in the disposal of the material world and in the solution of the difficulty as to how the circumscribed *Jiva* can be the all-embracing Brahman, and how the individualized *Jivas* do not lose their all-filling vastness even when penned up in their material prisons. The expansion of the self, which is so intimately connected with the little body of each man, into the all-embracing Brahman, and the endeavour to conceive the many millions of *Jivas* as evolved out of Him, while each *Jiva* is at the same time self-sufficient and constitutes the totality of the Brahman, tax severely our weak imaginations. The cosmos is traced up to a few elementary phenomena,—the Creator, *Jiva*, and the five material elements in a germic state; the *Jiva* is not a whole to be divided into individual *Jivas* at the time of

the creative evolution, but denotes the whole class of *Jivas*, of which each is bound down and individualized by its load of past *Karma*. The Creator has to adapt His creative work to the results which necessarily belong to the *Karma* of each soul, and creation is but an evolution out of the germs, material and spiritual, embedded in the conglomerate *Māyā*. In the order of creation, that is, in the order in which the Universe is drawn out of its minute and invisible state in the *Māla Prakṛiti*, or first cause, to a visible state, ether (अकाश) is the first to take a distinctive form. But, this ether which first springs into existence out of its germ in the *Māyā* is not pure, unmixed ether; for in it lie, also in a germic state, the elements of air (वायु), light (तेजस्), water (अप्), and earth (पृथ्वी). From the minute and germic (सूक्ष्म) ether, after its separation from the *Māyā*, air emerges; from this air light or fire; from light proceed the *Sākshma* waters; and from these comes out the germic earth. The five elements which were in the original *Māyā* in an unevolved state have now taken each its distinctive form, but remain yet minute and invisible. They are next mixed up so as to form the material basis of the world. To each of the five elements belong the three attributes of *Satwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, because of their origin in *Māyā* which has these three attributes. The attributes so imparted to the five elements differentiate them so as to make them competent to serve as the materials of creation. The elements in their *Satwa* state give rise to the five knowledge-giving senses. *Ākāśa* in its *Satwa* state gives rise to hearing; so rise into being the senses of touch, sight, taste and smell respectively from the elements of air, fire, water and earth when in their *Satwa* attribute. Similarly from the elements when in their *Rajas* attribute, rise the five organs of action, and from them when in their *Tamas* attribute rise the grosser forms of matter.

It should be remembered that in all this evolution of the universe from the germs imbedded in the *Māyā*, there is no noumenal reality; it is simply the evolution of a phenomenal cosmos which has a deceptive existence, and even that only to the limited vision of the *Jiva* while under the sway of the *Māyā*. Each *Jiva* may evolve its own illusory world induced thereto by its *Karma*; or one and the same world may serve alike for all *Jivas*. There are a few thinkers of this school in whose view the world rises into illusory existence with each single impression. But this extreme doctrine has not found general acceptance. It is known as the doctrine of "creation of with sight" (दृष्टि सृष्टि पक्ष).

The experience of men, according to this view, that a given object is one and the same for all, is an illusion similar to that which makes a number of persons fly away alike from a rope under the illusion that it is a snake; what causes an illusion in one individual is itself false and cannot consequently be the same as that which produces the illusory impression in another, however similar the two impressions may be. In the blinded mind of the

Jiva rise up the deceptive conceptions at the instance of the Creator, but subject to the absolute control of its past *Karma*. This is its universe, the world in which it moves and lives. As this world has no external reality and as its features are determined for the *Jiva* by its special *Karma*, it stands to reason that each *Jiva* must have its own specific illusions. But logical though this conclusion appears to be, it has yet been rejected by the general body of the Advaita philosophers.

It is unnecessary to dwell at length on the doctrine of *Karma* which plays so important a part in this philosophy. Each *Jiva* carries with it its burden of *Karma*, that is, the fruits of its conduct in past lives; this determines its career in the future as it has determined its fate in the past. *Iswara* himself is not independent of it, as his creative work is determined at every step by it. It impels the Creator to the act of creation; and the details of creation have to be moulded in accordance with the results which have accrued to each *Jiva* from its particular course of conduct. In this unbroken flow of the results of *Karma* there may be a diversion due to the knowledge which a preceptor may have grace to impart; and such a diversion may lead to final salvation or *Moksha*. We have already stated that the Advaitin has no explanation to offer as to how the *Jiva* first came under the sway of *Karma*. He takes facts and phenomena as they are and traces them onwards to their final consummation; and in tracing them back, in the inverse order, to their origin, he assumes the existence of primitive germs which develop into the phenomenal cosmos in the hands of the Creator. *Karma* forms one of the primary germs of the future universe.

The Advaitin holds that the Creator is the Brahman covered over by the blinding *Mâyâ*. From His state of eternal bliss, He descends to the act of creation only when the pre-existing *Mâyâ* envelopes Him in utter darkness and removes Him from the vision of the *Jiva*. He is the spectator of His creative work and stands unaffected by it. He perceives the world as we perceive it, but does not fall into the illusion that it is a true entity as we do. One may be conscious of an object without believing that it really exists. To *Jiva*, when not enlightened by true knowledge, there is the perception of an external world and along with it, there goes also the belief that the perceived world is a truly existing reality. To *Iswara*, on the other hand, there is only the presentation of the illusion. He never falls into the error of believing the illusion to be a true existence. The juggler believes not in the illusions he creates, though he is aware of their deceptive existence. The Creator is, besides, actively engaged with the objects of creation, and keeps them up in a continuous course, controls and guides them as much as if they were true. So does the Juggler with his creations.

Does *Karma* create the world with a deliberate motive? Does he sit to the work with the resolve to delude the *Jivas*? The Advaitin cannot ascribe motive of any kind to the Creator; and yet there

must be an impelling force to make God take up the work of creation. This impelling force he finds in the *Karma* of the *Jivas*. These are, in the view of Indian philosophy generally, flitting from existence to existence with their load of acquired *Karma*, their position in the animal kingdom and their career through life being determined entirely by it. This *Karma* which necessitates their going through some form of animal life, furnishes *Iswara* with the motive power to evolve the surroundings for the *Jivas* to work out their allotted lives. And if the creation of *Iswara* in such circumstances is only an illusion, it is because he thinks such a world sufficient for the purpose. The Juggler creates what he thinks necessary for the delight of his audience; and *Iswara* creates similarly just what is called for by the *Karma* of the *Jivas* on whose behalf he undertakes the task.

But for whom did the conjuring *Iswara* create the world at the beginning, when the *Jivas* had not emerged out of their embryonic state in the *Mâyâ*? The *Jivas* are not then in a state of conscious existence, to have the phantom of creation presented by *Avidyâ* to their deluded imaginations. It cannot be that the Creator brought the world into existence for His own delusion. It is true that created matter cheats not the Creator into a belief of its reality. Its phenomenal appearance is the same to *Iswara* as it is to *Jiva*; but the latter has belief in its reality over and above the simple consciousness of external perception. Whether the *Jivas* have sprung up into conscious existence or not, the illusion may exist; *Iswara* when conditioned by *Mâyâ* may sustain the illusory creation. He is not deceived by it; but knows that the *Jivas*, if they exist, would be deceived by it. As the perception of an illusory object may co-exist along with the conviction that it is only an illusion, there is no absurdity in the statement that the world comes into existence even before the *Jivas* enter upon their periods of conscious life.

The difficulty here raised against the Advaitin's doctrine of creation is in reality beside the point. It has been stated that creation is but the means for the *Jiva* to unburden its load of *Karma*. Its specific features are entirely regulated by this *Karma*. The world takes shape and grows under the inspiring agency of *Iswara*, but yet only in accordance with the *Karma* of each *Jiva*. Hence the development of the world must be going on *pari passu* with the development of the results of *Karma*. The world is not created first independently of those whose *Karma* accounts for its coming into existence; and hence the question of its existence in the absence of the *Jivas* does not properly arise.

If the Brahman be beyond the reach of our senses, and if the world rests ultimately upon Him, can we possibly be conscious of the world without being conscious of the Brahman upon whom it rests? Illusion attaches, an objector may say, to what lies within the range of perception and cannot therefore be predicated of the world which is in Brahman. But is the world beyond perception?

Is it an entity resting upon the Brahman? These are assumptions involved in the objection, but not admitted by the Advaitin. The world is only a world of perception, created by the misleading senses and lasting only so long as we do not learn to get behind and beyond the information brought by them. And in no sense is it dependent upon the Brahman. It depends for its creation and existence upon the *Jiva* enveloped as it is by *Avidyā*. Existing exclusively on the basis of the senses, the world cannot be removed into the region of the incomprehensible to a kinship with the Brahman. If we fall at any time into the mistake of connecting the world with the Brahman, it is simply another instance of the mistake we commit in ascribing blue color to the sky.

The Advaitin has said that the Brahman is without attributes and he is therefore without form or shape. How can we ascribe the action of creation to a shapeless something—nothing? How can He be all-embracing and be present in the created world? And what is meant by the salvation of the *Jiva*, if the *Jiva* cannot find its resting place in a personal God? These questions present no difficulty to our philosopher. The Brahman is all-embracing; and creation is but a portion of this whole dimmed by *Avidyā* in which the *Jiva* imagines the existence of illusory objects. Space does not enter the newly made pot. It is inside the pot already and the talk of the space in the pot and of the space outside it has no real meaning and is assumed only for purposes of convenience (व्यावहारिक). The same applies to the distinction between the Brahman and the *Jiva*. Salvation is but the disappearance of *Avidyā* and there is no action or motion to the *Jiva* or to the Brahman involved in the idea of Salvation. The *Jiva* is but reminded of its oneness with the Brahman, as a man who is unconscious of the garland he wears becomes conscious of the same when reminded of its existence. There is no change it has to undergo, no action or motion, when it attains to oneness with the Brahman. It is like a person who wakes up from sleep to consciousness and no more. The difficulty of conceiving how a shapeless being can act, perhaps, still remains. We ascribe action to the Brahman when we say that He creates, and to the *Jiva* when we speak of his going to heaven, to hell, &c. This would be conceivable if we believe the Brahman and the *Jiva* to be personal. How to explain it when these are believed to be impersonal? But do we not believe and speak of the space in the pot to move with the pot. The *Jiva* may be similarly spoken of as moving and acting under its conditions. In its pure, unconditioned state, action is contrary to its nature; and action is super-induced upon the conception only when it becomes tainted by *Avidyā*.

The *Jiva* has three aids to overcome the effects of *Avidyā* and to attain Salvation. They are initiation by a Guru (श्रवण), reflection and ratiocination (मनन) and contemplation and comparison (निदिध्यासन). Of these the first is more useful

and efficient than the other two. The true comprehension of the Vedānta is possible only when we receive instruction in its true import from a teacher. When an individual is so far advanced in the path of knowledge as to be aware of the distinction between the eternal and the not-eternal, when he has learnt to be indifferent to pleasures and pains, when he has secured a mastery over his mind (शम), over his senses (दम), and over his passions (उपरम), and when he is without desire (वित्तिक्षा) and has acquired the habit of mental firmness and is well-founded in faith, and lastly when his heart yearns for salvation, then it is that he feels the thirst for initiation from a teacher. And this preparation of the mind is the result of a due discharge of his appointed duties, with single-minded devotion and without any thought of the benefit that may accrue to self from such righteous conduct.

It remains for us to state briefly the view taken of Salvation by the Advaita philosopher. How remote his ideas of God and soul are from those of the believers in the Bible would have been made clear by the summary given above of the main theses of the Advaita philosophy. The Advaitin finds no place in his metaphysical cosmos for a personal God or for particular souls. God is not for him a glorious blaze of light enthroned on high in human form with the souls of favored mortals on his right, singing eternal peans to his glory. The God of Advaitism may be conceived as being spiritually analagous in part to the nebulous substance of the Evolutionist. Both the things agree in one particular, their exhaustive occupation of the whole of the universe. But the spiritual Brahman of the Advaitin is one and the same for ever, unlike the material substance of the Evolutionist which is differentiated into parts and gives rise to the varied phenomena of the world. To the Evolutionist the world evolved out of the nebulous substance is a real, substantial world, in which we ourselves have a part of the original substance in a new combination. But to the Advaitin there is no such transmutation of the Brahman, and the evolved world is an illusion. The *Jiva*, while under the influence of *Karma*, goes for a time through a set of dream-like experiences; but the old transparent homogeneity is only obscured for a time by the hazy mist born of ignorance. The removal of this mist and the restoration of the individual *Jiva* to its pristine purity constitute Salvation or liberation. The human soul recognizes that it is itself the Brahman and this recognition lasts but for a moment, as such a phenomenon of consciousness is not consistent with the actual realization by the human soul of its oneness with the universal Soul. Before this consummation is actually secured, and as the step just preceding its attainment, we have the realization of the Brahman in self-Brahma Sākshātkāram. The destruction of *Avidyā* leads instantaneously to this realization. But the goal is not reached and the soul has not won salvation so long as it retains the consciousness of its identity with the Brahman. Though as a preparatory step to salvation the soul has to see the Brahman in itself, and though with-

out the consciousness of this identity *Moksha* cannot possibly be secured, yet the presence of this conscious state in the *Jiva* is hostile to salvation, as in that state of incomprehensible blessedness there is no room for any conscious phenomenon, however exalted it may be. The presence of a conscious phenomenon would be a breach in the universality of the *Atman*. The initiation by the teacher, reflection and the mental effort to realise the Brahman in self, all these lead to the consciousness of identity; but so long as this consciousness lasts there is the knowledge of duality and salvation is not reached.

The *Avidyā* that now envelops the *Jiva* may be destroyed even in this life of ours. Our bodies which are its creations may continue in existence even after its disappearance, as the continuous presence of the cause is not a necessary condition for the continuance of the effect. The cause may be removed and yet the effect persist, as the fear roused in us by the idea that the rope in our path is a snake sometimes continues even after the discovery of the mistake, and as the wheel set in motion by the rotating rod continues to rotate even after the rod is removed. The *Jiva* may therefore, continue to feel the effects of *Avidyā* even after its destruction and *Avidyā* may hence be destroyed even in this life of ours. The existence of the body after the removal of its cause is due to *Prarābhakarma*—such action of ours as had commenced to bear fruit prior to the removal of *Avidyā*, and had not run their course at the time of its removal. When this should have been lived through in the subsequent pleasures and pains of the individual, the consciousness of identity remains pure and free, to end with the attainment of salvation.

But what is it that gets final salvation? It cannot be that the body which had never any real existence is the recipient. Is it the *Jiva* that is liberated? Was it ever in bondage? Could the *Jiva* that is the Brahman, have stood at any time in need of salvation? Can we conceive it as having a desire for it, when it is desireless? And can the Brahman secure what it does not desire? The Advaitin accepts the full force of all these questions and yet declares that it is the *Jiva* that is liberated. When cooped up in the body it is subject to desires. Though these cannot approach it in its free, unlettered state, they attach themselves to the knot of *chit* and *achit*—intelligence and non-intelligence, which constitutes animal existence. Salvation is an object of desire only so long as this knot, the commingling of intelligence and illusion, is entire; the knot and the unintelligent part of it are destroyed by knowledge and the *Jiva* stands desireless and free.

Is salvation the same to all? The efforts of men towards liberation vary in many ways; one would secure it by sacrifices and rituals; another by faith; a third by contemplation, and so on. The results of these divers efforts must also be divers, as the effects can be no other than what the causes make them. It follows that salvation should vary from man to man, and there may also be the distinction of

higher and lower in it. But the assumption involved in this objection is not accepted by the Advaitin. In his view there is but one means of securing salvation and that is the knowledge of identity. Worship of the gods, virtuous conduct, sacrifices, faith, &c., can lead to salvation only through this knowledge. Even granting that there is more than one path to salvation, he does not admit that what results from a variety of causes must for that reason be divers. Many causes produce severally one and the same effect. So that even if our efforts were taken to be the direct causes of salvation, any diversity in them cannot justify the inference to a like diversity in the effect. There is but one entity left after the destruction of the deluding *Avidyā*. It is changeless, and all-pervasive; it has no action, nor variation of state. There is no room, therefore, in it for the distinction of higher and lower.

We shall conclude with a categorical statement of the philosophy now described.

1. The Brahman alone exists; it is all-embracing, attributeless and unknowable.

2. The phenomenal world is a fact of present experience without a beginning but not endless. So are *Jiva*, *Iswara* and *Māyā*.

3. So long as the *Jiva* is under the influence of *Māyā* it believes in the world, in *Iswara*, in creation, in the efficacy of *karma*, &c., and is unable to realise its oneness with the Brahman.

4. The Brahman covered over by ignorance is *Iswara*. He as *Iswara* corresponds to the rope in which the snake is imagined and is also the efficient cause of creation. *Māyā* is the matter out of which is woven by *Iswara* the fiction of the world, and this fiction is imagined by *Jiva* to rest in *Iswara*, as the imagined snake is supposed to rest in the rope.

5. *Karma* prompts *Iswara* to the work of creation. When the course of *karma* is run or when true knowledge is secured, *Avidyā* is destroyed, *Iswara*, and the world vanish to the opened vision of the *Jiva*; and the *Jiva* or the Brahman stands alone.

Correspondence.

A STORY.

To illustrate the tenacity of man's clinging to life and its consequences to which reference was made in his last communication, our Calcutta Sanyāsin correspondent has sent us the following story:—

Once upon a time there lived a confectioner in a certain village of North India. He had his home in the skirt of his village and adjacent to his home was his shop of sweetmeats, which was a favourite resort of the village boys, boys being especially fond of sweetmeats. The shop was the best of all similar shops in the village. It was the principal source of his income, some of which, after defraying the expenses of his family, consisting of his wife and two little children aged eight and five years respectively,

he could manage to lay by day by day without the least knowledge of anyone not even of his wife, although he was a very loving husband.

One day, a little before noon, as he was sitting in his shop, selling sweets to his customers, a good looking *Sanyâsin* in a tattered cloak came to his shop to find shelter for a while from the scorching sun. After taking a little rest he wanted to drink some water, and the confectioner readily obliged him by offering him a *lota* of cool water, together with some sweets. The *Sâdhu*, after being refreshed, again asked of him to mend his clothing which was full of holes, and almost in tatters, saying he would be very much obliged to him if he did so, for he could not sleep in the night because of the sting of mosquitoes that find entrance inside through the holes of his garment. This also the confectioner obeyed, for he was a very good man, and after three hours labour, he could give a definite shape to the garment which was in a pitiable shapeless condition before. That night the *Sanyâsin* slept very soundly for the mosquitoes had no longer any holes in his dress to enter in.

Next morning, when the confectioner was in his shop the *Sâdhu* appeared before him, now not to ask anything of him, but to remunerate him for the good he had done him the previous day, not in the shape of money of course, for he had altogether forsaken both wealth and woman, but to offer him something higher than the world, as he had a great power in him, having realized his Higher Self or Brahman, and so feeling one and the same with the Eternal. Such *Sâdhus*, although they have no attractions in the world, still stay here to guide and take other men to their proper places, who do not like to play any part here any longer. Now he saw that the confectioner had a great desire to enjoy the things of the world and so would not forsake the enjoyments of life to realize the Higher Self. So he wanted him to go to *Goloka* where he thought his benefactor would find enjoyments in abundance, even more than he could desire. Accordingly he told him to start immediately for the blessed place in a *vimâna* or flying chariot and take the last leave of his wife and children. At this the confectioner mused a little, and then implored the anchorite in the following strain :

"O master, who will not go to that blessed land where the sweetest and most blessed couple Sri Sri Râdhâ and Syâma eternally shed bliss and benign profusion on their innumerable adorers and lovers? Men give up all wealth and honour and lead a strictly ascetic life in the forests for years and years with the hope of going to that blessed abode after their departure from this world. O large-hearted saint, your munificence is without any parallel. But as you know all, you have of course seen those two helpless boys who have no friend here in this world save me. It will make them altogether miserable, if I leave them thus helpless. If you kindly wait a few years, say eight, till they can earn at least a pittance for themselves, you will do me the highest favour indeed."

The *Sâdhu* heard all this, and finding his attrac-

tion towards his children more than that towards God and heaven, and taking compassion upon him, desisted from his attempt and agreed to come to him after eight years on the same day of the year.

On the appointed day the anchorite came again and told him his desire and the confectioner from his shop pleaded most piteously, "O sire what an unbearable load of misfortune the Lord of the Universe has hoarded for me. Look at my two boys. How wicked they have become; they have spent up nearly all that I have laid by hitherto, through liquor and bad company. Now I am bent upon getting them married and this may abate their thriftlessness by tying them to the family; and master, as I require money for this purpose to meet their marriage expenses, as well as to provide for their future maintenance, I beg leave of you for another eight years."

The good anchorite heard all this silently, but knowing that his love for his family was more than that for anything else and so feeling compassion for him, again departed promising to return on the same day after another eight years.

The years fled away and on the appointed day the *Sâdhu* re-appeared to see in the place of a goodly confectioner's shop a wretched ill-thatched grocery where the eldest son was occasionally retailing things of small value to the poorer class of the village. He approached the son and inquired of the father.

"O alas master! he is dead these seven years," replied the son, "leaving us in a sea of troubles. We are altogether impoverished. We have no more that fine shop and I keep up this poor grocery; and you can well see my younger brother there in the field at work with the plough."

The hermit heard all these silently, then, as he could know all things if he willed, he understood that the father was again born as a bullock, one of the very same bullocks which were ploughing the field guided by the younger son. He therefore waited there till at noon the husbandman unyoked the bullocks to give them and himself rest for the day. He then seized the opportunity, when no one was near, to enter into the bullock-shed, and taking a little of the holywater out of his begging bowl, sprinkled it over the head of the said ox, to remind him who he was in his former birth, as well as about the contract between them both. This done, the ox bowed his head and began to complain, speaking like a man:—"O Sir, yes this is the appointed day. Since nothing is hidden from your view, you can easily see the marks of poverty all round. All—all have been spent up by those two fools, my naughty, luckless sons. A year or two more and then they are sure to be starved to death. O master, won't you allow me, at this juncture, to plough for them a few years to see if they can again rally?"

The hermit heard this in silence but finding no amount of lecturing could make him give up his indomitable clinging to life and feeling pity for him, he again agreed to appear after some years. After the lapse of the term, the hermit returned to

the place and began to search for the shop, but he could not find it there. He then gradually proceeded to the house of the old confectioner but at the door he was attacked by a currish dog lean and emaciated and made still more furious for that. So he began to call aloud to the inmates of the house and when the eldest son appeared, he inquired about the welfare of his family, and at last, in the course of conversation he inquired about the bullock too. The man answered "ah! master, the poor creature died a year before. What a good creature he was! He ate but little and laboured from morning till night. Such another ox is hard to get." Hearing this, the hermit, by his all-knowing power, came to know that the currish dog was no other than the old confectioner himself, who was still so assiduous in guarding the small property, which was yet left that he attacked with furious barking, any stranger that came lest he should take even a straw from the dear home. And so he waited for an opportunity to remind him of his former self and the contract between them, and when no one was near, he sprinkled the dog with holywater from his bowl and thereby brought him to his senses. Then the dog bowed down his head and began to weep at his feet for his utter misfortune and concluded by saying,—“O Master, allow me even a few years more to see my unfortunate sons rally round and guard the remnant of my property from the clutch of an innumerable number of thieves that infest this neighbourhood. I laboured much in my days to collect the little I have and now I cannot leave it to be the prey of thieves.” The hermit heard in silence but finding it useless to argue with him, he again promised to return after some years.

The term elapsed; he again appeared there and found, in the place of the confectioner's home two huts lately erected. On inquiring he collected the following facts from the neighbours. The two brothers litigated against each other and had been almost reduced to poverty. They no longer live conjointly, but have built for themselves two huts and live there separately each with his family, their former home having been destroyed long before this.

Then he gradually proceeded to one of the huts but he did not find the dog there. Then he came to know by his all-knowing power that the confectioner had become a serpent and had been living in a subterranean cave just below the site of his former room where he, of yore, used to sleep with his loving spouse, coiling himself round a brazen jug which contained all the money he had stored and secreted there. At this time the two brothers came out of one of the huts quarrelling with each other for some trifling matters. When they saw the *Sādhu* there before them, one of them exclaimed, lo! brother, all our misfortunes have been brought about by this ill-omened vāga bond, for ever since he has been visiting us, we have been becoming poorer and poorer; our parents died, all our property has well nigh been extinguished,—all through this wretched rogue of a wizard.” And turning to the hermit he exclaimed, “now hence, thou, infernal messenger of misfortune, or it will be a very bad day for thee.” On hearing this,

the calm and collected hermit said “Dear friends, have you become so poor? Do you want money? Then go and dig out the site of the room where your parents used formerly to sleep and what money you will find there divide equally among yourselves.”

On hearing this, the two brothers were exceedingly happy and began to dig the place with all their might. When they approached the jug the viper darted against them and because they ran back immediately they were saved from certain death from snake-bite. They now thought that the *Sādhu* was a veritable rogue who purposely wanted to cast them into the mouth of the snake, and accordingly they resolved to belabour him right and left. Knowing their purpose, the hermit told them, “Do you think that I am a liar? Don't you see the rim of the brazen jug there? It contains all the money you want. Kill the serpent and it is all yours.” On hearing this they inspected the hole from a distance and began to be convinced of the truth of the hermit's assertion, by descrying the rusty rim of a jug therein. So desisting from their fell purpose they directed all their anger against the snake and soon had him killed.

The hermit, in the mean time, took the disembodied self or spirit of the snake, the confectioner, and kept it hidden in a fold of his long clotted locks and went away while the two brothers were engaged in dividing the money among themselves with great glee. When the anchorite came to his hermitage in the deep deep forest, he saw the royal couple of the adjacent territory, with a large retinue, waiting for him there. When they saw him they were exceedingly glad and bowed down to him and touched his feet imploring him to bestow a son on them to be the heir of their kingdom. The great saint found an opportunity to invest for a time the spirit of the confectioner, with a royal person and so he told the king and the queen, that their prayer would be fulfilled, that they would soon see the face of their son who would be a very good, nice, intelligent, obedient, God-fearing, and loving boy but was destined to be snatched away from the world when sixteen years of age. The king and the queen seeing no other alternative, at last agreed to the proposal, for they thought it was better to have the pleasure of embracing and kissing a son, even though for a short time, than to have none at all. So they departed and in course of time they had a very nice, obedient, and intelligent boy who was their chief solace in life. He was good, dutiful, meek and lowly but when the sixteenth year came, a *vimāna* descended from heaven and took the prince away from the world to the great astonishment of the king and queen and all their subjects who now got some comforts, even in so great a bereavement, by remembering the words of the hermit, and thinking the prince was too good and righteous to stay on in this sinful world.

Here my story ends. Reader, think well and deeply on its import, at least to oblige,

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